

**Congressman Huelskamp Testimony for H.R. 1015**  
**Committee on Veterans Affairs – O&I Markup, Tuesday April 21, 2015 at 4pm.**

Thank you to the Chairman for the opportunity to speak briefly in support of H.R. 1015 and the minor change included in this legislation during today's markup.

On this committee and in the media we've heard a lot of about illicit business owners who took advantage of set asides rightfully reserved for service disabled, veteran-owned small businesses. The evidenced fraud and abuse requires stricter enforcement mechanisms and this bill aims to put those in place.

The Protecting Business Opportunities for Veterans Act applies a common sense solution to the problem by simply requiring those receiving a contract (from whom) will be required to 1) certify to the VA they meet the specific performance requirements already in law and 2) acknowledge the certification is subject to the false statement penalty under the U.S. criminal code.

The Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute includes one slight change to the bill text following feedback we received after last month's legislative hearing. The bill was discussed with VA who recommended removal of the Director, OSDDBU from the requirement to jointly refer possible violations to OIG. Only the Chief, Acquisition Office must do so under the change at section(2)(a)(4)(A).

The intent of this bill is to provide law enforcement with the necessary tools to crack down on illicit contractors who use pass-throughs and other methods, to take advantage of set asides that are rightfully reserved for veterans. I am pleased to say the American Legion, VFW, and AMVETS supports this legislation.

The Protecting Business Opportunities for Veterans Act will ensure those rightfully deserving of the contracts have access and put in place tougher enforcement mechanisms to ensure those wishing to exploit the system are caught and held accountable.